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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the results of a questionnaire distributed to all students enrolled at the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science (Ohio) at its main campus in Kent and its extension in Columbus during the spring semester of 1996. The purpose of the survey was to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses by measuring students' extent of agreement with a series of statements. The study achieved a 54.1% response rate, with 226 out of 417 surveys returned. The responding students have pride as future librarians and appreciation for the work of the faculty; they value the practicum experience, the timely reception of admission materials, and feel strongly that the degree requirements are stated clearly. Respondents showed the least agreement on items concerning the following areas: the number of electives currently being offered, preparation for job interviews, opportunity for student input, and the number of classes offered on Saturdays. The present survey matches a previous survey's highest and lowest mean scores. In comparing the two studies, the mean scores of 34 of the 42 previously asked questions have increased, indicating that students have somewhat more positive feelings towards the program than they did previously. Appendices include the cover letter, questionnaire, and mean scores of both the 1996 and 1989 surveys. (Contains 11 references.) (Author/SWC)

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SURVEY OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN KENT STATE UNIVERSITY'S SLIS PROGRAM, SPRING 1996

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Patrick Daugherty

May, 1996

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the results of a questionnaire distributed to all of the students enrolled at the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science at its main campus in Kent and its extension in Columbus during the spring semester of 1996. The purpose of the survey was to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses by students' extent of agreement with a series of statements. The findings of this survey indicate that the responding students have pride as future librarians and appreciation for the work of the faculty; they value the practicum experience, the timely reception of admission materials, and feel strongly that there was a clarity in stating the degree requirements. Respondents to the survey showed the least agreement on items concerning the following areas: the number of electives currently being offered, preparation for job interviews, opportunity for student input, and the number of classes offered on Saturdays. The present survey matches an earlier survey as to highest and lowest mean scores. Even so, in comparing the two studies, the mean scores of thirty-four of the forty-two previously asked questions have increased, indicating that students have somewhat more positive feelings towards the program than they did seven years ago.

Master's Research Paper by

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Approved by

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I. INTRODUCTION

Ongoing student evaluation of a library and information science program is essential to its effectiveness and ultimate success. Institutions of higher education realize the necessity of student feedback regarding courses and individual instructors as indicated by regular end-of-term evaluations. Periodically, however, it is appropriate and desirable that a program, being more than the sum of its separate courses and individual faculty members, be evaluated in its entirety. External agencies that evaluate programs of study such as the American Library Association's Committee on Accreditation (COA), in their Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies (1992),[1] mandate that student input is essential to its evaluation process.[2]

The American Library Association began to address the issue of accreditation for library schools in 1924 with the creation of the Board of Education for Librarianship. In 1956, this office was replaced by the Committee on Accreditation, which undertook responsibility for developing and formulating accreditation standards for library schools.[3] The first Standards for Accreditation (on which the COA bases all of its accrediting activity), written in 1951, was revised in 1972. Its latest revision occurred in 1992 and was officially adopted January 1, 1993.

The COA is recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and by the United States Secretary of Education as the accrediting agency for library and information studies programs.[4] It is composed of a twelve-member committee appointed by ALA's executive board, each member serving staggered terms of two-year periods no more than twice consecutively.[5] Accreditation by the COA consists of site visits by teams of trained individuals who are either appointed by the committee or COA members themselves.

Regarding student input, the COA's Standards on Accreditation stipulate that student participation is required in each of the six areas evaluated. Evans, detailing the accreditation process, states that student input must be included in an intensive self-evaluation prepared by the school. She goes on to emphasize that the committee "examines records and documentation (e.g. minutes of meetings, syllabi, **student papers**[author's emphasis], faculty publications) that demonstrate the school is meeting the standards."[6]

Library and information science literature also attests to the importance of ongoing evaluation. Moran, addresses the issue of faculty evaluation in schools of library and information science, stating that student evaluations are "the most heavily used evidence employed in judging teaching effectiveness."[7]

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine library and information science (LIS) students' perceptions of the program at Kent State University,

including issues related to the curriculum, faculty, facilities and other resources, and the administration. The findings update a similar earlier study conducted by Buttlar and Rubin in 1989. An additional objective is to compare previous findings with current results. The data collected will also be reflected in the self-study report by the school for the upcoming visit by the Committee on Accreditation.

Definition of Terms

Committee on Accreditation: This committee is "'responsible for the execution of the accreditation program of the ALA and to develop and formulate standards of education. . .' for graduate programs of library and information studies leading to a master's degree."[8]

Full-time students: These are graduate students in the SLIS program at either campus who attend eight or more credit-hours of classes during a semester.

Part-time students: These are graduate students in the SLIS program at either campus who attend less than eight credit-hours of classes during a semester.

Limitations of the Study

This study pertains specifically to students of the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science at its main campus in Kent and its extension in Columbus during the spring semester of 1996;

therefore findings are not necessarily generalizable to all library and information science students.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Periodically, accredited schools of library and information science conduct surveys to evaluate their programs and to maintain accreditation. The survey is an appropriate method for collecting such information. Surveys have been used by many library and information science schools and associations to gather student input on a wide range of issues.

Kent State University LIS Student Surveys

In a self-study of students at Kent State University's Library and Information Science program, Buttlar and Rubin conducted a survey in 1989, the results of which were used in a report for the Committee on Accreditation of that same year. The purpose of the survey was to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses, at its campuses in both Kent and Columbus. Reflecting the school's strong points, the study showed that students felt: faculty provided current information and were well-prepared for their classes, the program fostered professional pride, the practicum was a valuable experience, and the school provided satisfactory information on current jobs. Points of student concern were, "procedural matters related to orientation, course scheduling, and research papers."[9]

Another study of library and information science students at Kent State University was done by Hansom during the summer of 1992. This study examined the responses to a questionnaire given to all graduate students enrolled in the school at both the Kent and Columbus campuses. The study's purpose was to provide demographic information of the school with particular emphasis to age and previous library work experience of the students. Results showed that three-fourths of the respondents are attending school part-time while continuing to work full-time; most are in their thirties; and the majority have an undergraduate degree in Education or the Humanities, while many already hold another master's degree. Other findings revealed that they consider the faculty helpful and that they do not feel prepared for work with computers. Male students tended to prepare for work in academic libraries while female students prepared for work in public libraries. Hansom writes that the three main reasons students chose the field of librarianship are that, "they like working in a library; they like books; and the subject matter is interesting to them."[10]

LISSADA Student Survey

Heim and Moen conducted a survey of 3,484 library and information science students enrolled in accredited programs during the spring semester of 1988. This survey (the Library and Information Science Students' Attitudes, Demographics, and Aspirations Survey - LISSADA) sought to identify their aspirations and attitudes so as to develop strategies for recruiting potential

students. As well, it examined particular issues relating to gender and ethnicity. Given that the median age of students surveyed was 35, the study also focused on adult vocational behavior.

Analysis of the data collected showed that the "typical" student enrolled at that time was "part-time, geographically place-bound, white, female, and in her mid-thirties with an undergraduate degree in English or education."[11] The authors suggest that schools with programs of library and information science should try to accommodate working adults living nearby. They emphasize that the number of minorities recruited and enrolled in schools must increase to meet the rising increase of minority populations in many parts of the United States.

International LIS Student Survey

Levels of satisfaction of international students with faculty of the United States library schools they attended was the subject of a survey completed by Tallman in the spring of 1990. Sixteen ALA-accredited programs were asked to participate, from which 114 responses by international doctoral and master's students provided information that was analyzed in the study. Dissatisfaction by the students was in "perceived lack of interest by U. S. faculty in international information environments, in international professional topics, and in international-student problems."[12] One recommendation noted by Tallman emphasized "that teaching principles and problem-solving skills, rather than practices, would enable students to use the

theory and skills they need to run programs appropriately for their own country."[13]

SLA Student Survey

Brimsek reported the results of a 1989 questionnaire completed by 347 student members of the Special Library Association (a 31 percent response rate). The purpose of the study was to profile the SLA student membership. The survey provided demographic information, charted levels of student awareness of SLA services, and noted student perceptions and opinions about special libraries. "Key among [its roles] are the networking opportunities afforded by SLA along with the employment and related services, i.e. salary survey, etc."[14] The study reported that 68 percent of the students were already working in special libraries while pursuing their degrees.

LIS Graduate Survey

Finally, a survey published in 1990 by White and Mort regarded 346 graduates from thirteen accredited library schools nine years after their graduation in 1980. The study was developed to examine the influencing factors on library science students in selecting a type of intended work setting upon enrollment in a library program; the extent to which such perceptions might change during the program; the relationship of these preferences to the first job after graduation; and the ability to successfully move to better

positions or to change from one type of library or research job climate to another. Responses indicated that geographic proximity to a school is the major consideration of students rather than "quality or availability of specialized courses in anticipation of certain careers."[15] The study also demonstrated that 26 percent of the graduates had changed from one type of library to another over the nine-year period. The authors suggest that accredited library schools are preparing students to work in all types of libraries rather than helping them specialize. They are, therefore, recommending a review of accreditation standards by library schools and by the ALA.

III. METHODOLOGY

The research design of this study is the survey method. The questionnaire, administered previously by Buttlar and Rubin(1989), was designed to collect student perceptions of the Kent State University Library and Information Science program.

Six demographic questions identifying program location, semester and year of entry, gender, primary library/worksetting, and prior library experience were added to the beginning of the instrument. Seven of the original questions were omitted. These dealt with: rating overall student competence, increasing program credits, adding a thesis to the program, knowing complaint procedures, and rating the organization of courses (another question on organization was kept). One question was combined with another on grading (examinations and papers). Some of the remaining forty-two entries were reworded to include "information science" with library concerns. Three new questions were added regarding adequacy of computer skills and instruction, and database resources. These forty-five questions were then reorganized into groups under the following headings: administration, program standards, research paper/ advising, curriculum, faculty, and resources/support.

The questionnaire was distributed to all of the students enrolled at the Kent and Columbus campuses of the School of Library and Information Science for the spring semester of 1996 (see Appendix A and Appendix B). The

questionnaires were distributed to students in two ways: the investigator placed them in the students' mailboxes at Kent; and some instructors at both campuses passed them out in their classes. Columbus students were requested to return their questionnaires to their instructors or to the survey box in the school's office.

The survey population was 417 students. Of these, two hundred twenty-six students responded, yielding a 54.1% return rate.

The data was entered into the EDD program and analyzed with the SAS program.

IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA

A total of 417 questionnaires were distributed and 226 were completed and returned for an overall response rate of 54.1%. One hundred forty-eight respondents (54%) out of 274 were from the main campus of Kent State University; 78 (54.5%) out of 143 were received from students in the extension program in Columbus, making each campus represented equally on a percentage basis. On an overall basis, the 148 respondents from the main campus represented approximately 65% of the sample, while the 78 Columbus students accounted for approximately 35%.

Demographic Information

Demographic information collected indicates that 102 (45.5%) students responding had entered the program within the current academic year; the large majority (171 or 76.3%) had started the program within the last two academic years. A relatively small number of students had been in the program for a long period of time (see Table 1).

When asked to indicate the type of library or work setting in which they would like to work, 55 (24.9%) preferred the public library, followed by 47 (21.3%), who selected the special library (see Table 2). A number of students

Table 1.

Distribution of all Students by Year of Enrollment in Program and Campus.

Year of Enrollment	Kent (N=148)		Columbus (N=78)		Total (N=226)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
1989	0	0.0%	1	1.3%	1	0.4%
1990	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
1991	4	2.7%	6	7.8%	10	4.5%
1992	12	8.2%	10	13.0%	22	9.8%
1993	13	8.8%	7	9.1%	20	8.9%
1994	44	29.9%	25	32.5%	69	30.2%
1995	72	49.0%	27	35.1%	99	44.2%
1996	2	1.4%	1	1.3%	3	1.3%
	147	100%	77	100%	224	100%

Table 2.

Types of Libraries in which Respondents were Primarily Interested by Campus.

Type of Library	Kent (N=148)		Columbus (N=78)		Total (N=226)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Academic	25	16.9%	13	16.7%	38	16.8%
Public	34	23.0%	21	27.0%	55	24.3%
School	8	5.4%	1	1.3%	9	3.9%
Special	24	16.2%	23	29.5%	47	20.7%
Academic/Public	9	6.0%	5	6.4%	14	6.1%
Academic/Special	14	9.5%	2	2.5%	16	7.0%
Public/School	8	5.4%	0	---	8	3.5%
Public/Special	2	1.3%	3	3.8%	5	2.2%
Other	2	1.3%	1	1.3%	3	1.3%
Undecided	17	11.5%	6	7.7%	23	10.1%
Missing	5	3.4%	3	3.8%	8	3.5%
	148	100%	78	100%	226	100%

Table 3.

Major Types of Libraries in which Respondents were Interested (Overlapping Frequencies).

Type of Library	Kent (N=148)		Columbus (N=78)		Total (N=226)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Academic	48	32.4%	20	25.6%	68	30.0%
Public	53	35.8%	29	37.2%	82	36.2%
School	10	6.7%	1	1.3%	11	7.5%
Special	40	27.0%	28	35.9%	68	30.0%

indicated "other" for primary interest; but of these, only three were essentially outside the realm of "special library" (automation vendor and two non-library professions in the law field).

Because some students were considering more than one type of library, frequencies representing each of the four major library types are overlapping, causing the overall percentage to total more than 100% (see Table 3). For this reason, the overlapping frequencies reflect a slightly different, but perhaps more accurate, view of student interest in the different fields. Eighty-two or 36.2% of the respondents indicated an interest in public libraries; and both academic and special libraries, each with 68 or 30.0%, shared an equal number of interested students responding. According to the statistics in Table 3, student interest in public libraries at the Kent and Columbus programs is relatively the same, with 35.8% and 37.2% at each respective campus. But at the Kent campus the next highest concentration of interest is in academic libraries, indicated by 48 of the 148 respondents (32.4%); whereas those in the

Columbus program showed interest in special libraries as its next highest concentration, reflected by 28 of the 78 respondents (35.9%).

A total of 221 respondents indicated their gender; 176 (79.6%) are female and 45 (20.4%) are male. Seventy respondents (31.8%) were full-time students; 150 (68.2%) were enrolled part-time. A total of 162 respondents (71.7%) had worked or were currently working in a library and 64 (28.3%) had no prior library experience.

Responses to the Scale - Administration

Items on the scale were clustered into categories representing administrative, program standard, advising/research paper, curricular, faculty, and resource/support issues. Mean scores were calculated for each item on the scale of questions in each of these categories. Mean scores for items related to administrative concerns are presented in Table 4. Respondents were in strong agreement (mean = 3.29; standard deviation = .601) with the statement that "I received admission materials in a timely manner." The statement "Degree requirements are clearly stated" was also strongly supported with a mean score of 3.26 (std. dev. = .661). Worth noting is that Columbus mean scores were higher than those on the main campus on six of the first nine statements.

The question drawing the widest difference in mean scores (a difference of .66) between the Kent program and the Columbus program "The school provides adequate preparation for job interviews" was also the second lowest scoring statement of the entire survey for both programs combined. The

Table 4.

Mean Scores for Items on the Scale Related to Administration by Kent and Columbus Campuses.

Statement	Kent		Columbus		Total	
	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s
1. The SLIS program provides timely information on current job prospects.	2.74	.698	2.78	.715	2.76	.702
2. As a new student, I received a good orientation to the program.	2.59	.744	2.83	.799	2.67	.769
3. The school provides adequate preparation for job interviews.	2.49	.839	1.85	.726	2.28	.856
4. There is an opportunity for student input concerning the SLIS program.	2.54	.738	2.71	.696	2.60	.726
5. The informational materials about the program prior to admission are adequate.	2.83	.603	2.96	.724	2.87	.648
6. The registration procedures are clearly explained.	3.04	.657	3.05	.700	3.04	.671
7. I received admission materials in a timely manner.	3.28	.585	3.31	.633	3.29	.601
8. The course descriptions accurately reflect the actual content of the courses.	3.00	.658	2.96	.594	2.98	.635
9. Degree requirements are clearly stated.	3.23	.695	3.31	.593	3.26	.661

total mean score was 2.28 (std. dev. = .856); for Kent respondents the mean score was 2.49 (std. dev. = .839) and at Columbus the mean score - its lowest - was 1.83 (std. dev. = .726). Although their answers did not effect the results, it is notable that 98 (or 43.8%) of the respondents answered this question with N/A.

Two other statements within the "administration" section received weak support from respondents from both programs. Mean scores for "There is opportunity for student input concerning the SLIS program" and "As a new student, I received a good orientation to the program" were 2.60 (std. dev. = .726) and 2.67 (std. dev. = .769), respectively.

In the 1989 survey, the question concerning preparation for interviews received a mean score of 2.64 (std. dev. = .802), suggesting possibly that students are less satisfied with current interview preparation (see Appendix C). Other significant comparisons include the mean scores of the two surveys for the statement regarding opportunity for student input in the program. For both the earlier and current studies, the mean scores for this question were the third lowest scores on the survey: 2.41 (std. dev. = .770) in 1989; 2.60 (std. dev. = .726) in 1996. For the second statement, student agreement concerning program orientation seems to have become stronger.

Program Standards

Student response showed strong support for nine of the thirteen statements in this section with mean scores above 3.0 (see Table 5). The second highest mean score in this survey, 3.61 (std. dev. = .602), was in response to

Table 5.

Mean Scores for Items on the Scale Related to Program Standards by Kent and Columbus Campuses.

Statement	Kent		Columbus		Total	
	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s
10. The SLIS program maintains a high academic standard	3.15	.737	2.92	.527	3.08	.682
11. I am receiving satisfactory preparation for the type(s) of setting(s) in which I want to work.	2.95	.733	2.77	.602	2.89	.694
12. The faculty members are well prepared for classes.	3.41	.571	3.23	.483	3.35	.548
13. Examinations and papers are graded fairly.	3.24	.556	3.19	.485	3.22	.531
14. I will be proud to be a librarian.	3.59	.571	3.65	.506	3.61	.549
15. I am encouraged to do original thinking in my assignments.	3.18	.715	3.38	.631	3.25	.693
16. Course evaluations are appropriate.	3.16	.519	3.27	.556	3.20	.533
17. I received satisfactory instruction in computer procedures required by the coursework.	2.74	.713	2.74	.735	2.74	.719
18. The program meets my expectations.	2.93	.609	2.90	.738	2.92	.655
19. I feel I am receiving a satisfactory education.	3.02	.586	3.00	.632	3.01	.601
20. The program provides good preparation for professional work in library and information science.	3.00	.627	2.91	.640	2.97	.631
21. I will be proud to be a graduate of the Kent State School of Library and Information Science.	3.30	.617	3.10	.572	3.23	.609
22. I have computer experience outside of that which I have received in the school of library and information science.	3.17	.786	3.28	.780	3.21	.784

the statement, "I will be proud to be a librarian." Another issue with which students were in strong agreement was that faculty members are well-prepared for classes; this question received a mean score of 3.35 (std. dev. = .548). This is one of the few statements to which no one registered a response of "strongly disagree." At the main campus, the response to faculty preparedness for classes was very strong, with a mean score of 3.41 (std. dev. = .571). At the Columbus campus, student respondents showed very high agreement as to being encouraged to do original thinking, the mean score for which was 3.38 (std. dev. = .631).

Although the student agreement was strong for this section, the statement with the least student agreement was concerned with receiving satisfactory instructions for computer procedures required by coursework, the mean score for which was 2.74 (std. dev. = .719). Comparing the mean scores of the two programs, students responding from Kent reflected more agreement (than those in Columbus) as to future pride in being a graduate from Kent State University (the difference in mean scores between the two campuses was .20); whereas respondents from Columbus indicated higher support for feeling encouraged to do original thinking in their assignments (the difference in mean scores between the two campuses was again .20). Students at Columbus also showed a slightly higher response as to having computer experience outside of the SLIS program, with a mean score of 3.28 (s = .780).

Mean scores for the statement "I will be proud to be a librarian" are the second highest scores for both the 1989 and the current surveys (see Appendix C). Another continuing response of strong support concerns faculty being well-

prepared for classes. Also noteworthy in comparing the two surveys is the significant increase in mean scores for statements 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 18.

Advising/Research Paper

The group of four questions regarding advising and research paper issues contains the highest occurrence of students responding with "not applicable/no opinion" to the items. Those who did respond showed minimal agreement for all four questions (see Table 6). The statement "My advisor provides adequate time for advising" had a mean score of 3.01 (s = .763); 63 students or 28.6% had no opinion. The same mean score of 3.01 (std. dev. = .835) was compiled from responses to "My research paper advisor is helpful in preparing my paper;" although 165 students (or 75.3%) responded with "not applicable/no opinion"!

Support was not as strong on the issue of receiving the help needed in selecting a topic for the research paper, for which the mean score was 2.82 (std. dev.= .864); 139 respondents or 64.1% refrained from entering an opinion. The lowest mean score, 2.70 (std. dev. = .852), was in response to the statement "The research paper is a valuable learning experience;" 122 or 55.5% of the respondents had no opinion. The mean scores for responses from Columbus were higher than those from Kent on questions 23 and 25 (3.10 and 3.08, respectively), and lower than Kent's on questions 24 and 26 (2.53 and 2.72, respectively).

The probable reason for such a low rate of statistically quantifiable responses to this section is that students begin working on their research

Table 6.

Mean Scores for Items on the Scale Related to Advising/Research Paper by Kent and Columbus Campuses.

Statement	Kent		Columbus		Total	
	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s
23. My advisor provides adequate time for advising.	2.97	.772	3.08	.749	3.01	.763
24. My research paper advisor is helpful in preparing my paper.	3.00	.894	3.07	.640	3.01	.835
25. The research paper is a valuable learning experience.	2.75	.785	2.53	.979	2.70	.852
26. I am receiving the help I need in selecting a topic for the research paper.	2.85	.923	2.72	.702	2.82	.864

papers toward the end of their programs, usually during their final semester. These statistics would indicate that less than half of the students responding to this survey are at the stage in their programs where they are considering work on their research papers.

Mean scores to three of the four statements are actually higher than those of the 1989 survey (see Appendix C); yet current student support for the research paper's being a valuable learning experience, although stronger (with a mean score of 2.70 in 1996 as compared with the earlier mean score of 2.55) is still somewhat low. The statement regarding advisor help in selecting a research paper topic, with a mean score of 3.01 (std. dev. = .835), is slightly below the earlier survey score of 3.06 (std. dev. = .826).

Curriculum

There was strong support for the statement "My practicum provides a valuable experience in a library setting" which had a mean score of 3.40 (std. dev. = .602); this was the only item in this group with a mean score above 3.00 (see Table 7). This is another statement to which no one responded with "strongly disagree." While agreement with this statement was strong among those who responded with a scalable answer, 166 or 76.1% indicated that this item was not applicable, possibly reflecting that the majority of students do not participate or had not yet participated in a practicum experience. The statement "There should be more electives in my program" had the lowest mean score in the entire survey, 2.21 (std. dev. = .781) - the same in both programs. This was one of three statements (along with items 28 and 30) for which the results were reversed so as to correlate with the other statements. One hundred twenty-three (or 62%) of the students who responded with a scalable answer (not N/A) wanted more electives.

Comparing the two programs, the mean score for Kent regarding the value of the practicum experience was higher than that of Columbus. For all other items on the scale related to curriculum, the mean scores of respondents at Columbus were slightly higher.

In relation to the earlier survey, overall response to the group of statements concerning curriculum, reflect the highest consistency of the six groups (see Appendix C). Mean scores for the statement "My practicum provides a valuable experience in a library setting" are almost identical (3.39 - 1989; 3.40 - 1996), and are the third highest mean scores for both studies.

Table 7.

Mean Scores for Items on the Scale Related to Curriculum by Kent and Columbus Campuses.

Statement	Kent		Columbus		Total	
	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s
27. There is sufficient flexibility in the program to pursue individual interests.	2.85	.801	2.88	.820	2.86	.805
28. There are too many core courses.	2.79	.791	2.87	.681	2.82	.754
29. Courses are offered at reasonable times of the day.	2.58	.754	2.80	.653	2.65	.727
30. There is too much work in this program as a whole.	2.91	.667	2.94	.659	2.92	.663
31. An appropriate number of courses is offered on Saturdays.	2.61	.801	2.62	.729	2.62	.773
32. My practicum provides a valuable experience in a library setting.	3.43	.634	3.27	.467	3.40	.602
33. The school provides the courses I want.	2.72	.642	2.48	.691	2.64	.667
34. There should be more electives in my program.	2.21	.762	2.22	.819	2.21	.781
35. An appropriate number of courses is offered in the evenings.	2.74	.818	2.91	.677	2.80	.773

Although consistent as well, the statement "There should be more electives in my program" received the lowest mean scores for both studies. Also the statement regarding an appropriate number of Saturday classes received the fourth lowest mean scores for both surveys.

Faculty

Student response to items regarding the faculty showed very strong support overall (see Table 8). Mean scores for each of the statements were above 3.20. The Kent respondents indicated strong agreement that "The faculty communicate current knowledge of the field" with a mean score of 3.32 (std.

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Table 8.

Mean Scores for Items on the Scale Related to Faculty by Kent and Columbus Campuses.

Statement	Kent		Columbus		Total	
	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s
36. The faculty communicate current knowledge of the field.	3.32	.576	3.22	.559	3.28	.571
37. Faculty members listen to the opinions of the students.	3.21	.585	3.21	.599	3.21	.588
38. In general, faculty members are available during their office hours.	3.25	.522	3.32	.530	3.27	.524
39. The faculty presents a variety of viewpoints.	3.23	.506	3.19	.629	3.22	.549
40. There is mutual respect between faculty and students.	3.24	.602	3.23	.538	3.24	.578

dev. = .576). Likewise, the Columbus students showed strong support for the statement "In general, faculty members are available during their office hours," which also had a mean score of 3.32 (std. dev. = .530). The high scores would seem to reflect student recognition of quality instruction. Response to the two earlier statements on faculty preparedness and encouragement of original thinking (in the group of statements concerning Program Standards) echo strong support for the issues relating to faculty in this section.

Although mean scores in 1989 for items related to faculty were consistently high, mean scores for the same items on the current survey have all risen even higher (see Appendix C).

Resources and Support

The final group, concerning available school resources and support,

Table 9.

Mean Scores for Items on the Scale Related to Resources and Support by Kent and Columbus Campuses.

Statement	Kent		Columbus		Total	
	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s
41. The support staff (secretaries, lab assistants, etc.) are helpful.	3.72	.523	3.45	.597	3.62	.564
42. The facilities of the computer lab meet my needs.	2.93	.807	2.26	.891	2.70	.895
43. The library's periodical collection meets my course needs.	3.19	.521	2.42	.893	2.97	.739
44. The library's book collection meets my needs.	3.03	.610	2.50	.880	2.89	.733
45. The library's other resources (databases, etc.) are sufficient.	3.15	.576	2.32	.833	2.91	.757

contained the survey's highest agreement for a single question (on support staff helpfulness) and yet the lowest agreement (of the six categories covered) for a group of questions (see Table 9). The statement "The support staff . . . are helpful" received enthusiastic agreement with mean scores of 3.72 (std. dev. = .523) at Kent and 3.45 (std. dev. = .597) at Columbus. However, the remaining four items received very low mean scores from respondents at Columbus. The statement "The facilities of the computer lab meet my needs" had the least support in this section, with a mean score of 2.26 (std. dev. = .891). There were similar results for Columbus regarding the library's periodical collection, book collection, and database resources. Kent mean scores for the same items indicated that respondents were reasonably satisfied with the various tools and resources available at the main campus.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this survey indicate that the responding students strongly supported the following areas: pride as future librarians, appreciation for the work of the faculty, the value of the practicum experience, timely reception of admission materials, and the clarity with which the degree requirements are stated.

Respondents to the survey showed the least agreement on items concerning the following areas: the number of electives currently being offered, preparation for job interviews, opportunity for student input, and the number of classes offered on Saturdays.

Overall mean scores for three of the six categories were above 3.00. Mean scores for items dealing with program standards averaged together came to 3.13. As well, the average of the mean scores for items regarding faculty was 3.24. Although the average of mean scores for the section concerning resources/support was 3.01, the difference in scores between Kent and Columbus was very wide. Columbus mean scores averaged 2.59, whereas mean scores for Kent averaged 3.20.

Averages for the mean scores of the other sections are: 2.86 for administration; 2.88 for advising/research paper; and 2.77 for curriculum. The section concerning curriculum received the least overall support of the six

categories.

The two highest and the two lowest mean scores for both campuses reflected agreement as to the school's strongest and weakest points. The statements "The support staff . . . are helpful" and "I will be proud to be a librarian" were the two with the most agreement. The statements "There should be more electives in my program" and "the school provides adequate preparation for job interviews" received the least agreement.

As well, the present survey matches the earlier survey as to highest and lowest mean scores. Even so, in comparing the two studies, the mean scores of thirty-four of the forty-two previously asked questions have increased (most scores having risen .15 points or more), indicating that students' positive feelings towards the program have risen slightly higher than those of seven years ago.

APPENDICES

Cover Letter

Questionnaire

1989/1996 Questionnaire
(with Mean Scores)

APPENDIX A.

School of Library and Information Science
(216) 672-2782
Fax 216-672-7965

Kent STATE UNIVERSITY
P. O Box 5190, Kent, Ohio 44242-0001

Re: SURVEY OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN KENT STATE UNIVERSITY'S SLIS PROGRAM

January 1, 1995

Dear Colleague:

I am a graduate student in the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) at Kent State University. I am conducting a study of SLIS students at the Kent and Columbus campuses. The following survey is an update of a previous study conducted in 1989. It will provide information regarding your perceptions of different aspects of the school's program.

Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed; only the investigator has access to the survey data. Please do not sign your name to this questionnaire. There is no penalty of any kind if you should choose not to participate in this study or if you would withdraw from participation at any time. While your cooperation is essential to the success of this research, it is, of course, voluntary. A copy of the results of this study will be available upon request.

If you have any further questions, please contact me, Patrick Daugherty, at (216) 688-3430 or Dr. Lois Buttlar, my research advisor, at (216) 672-2782. If you have any further questions regarding research at Kent State University, you may contact the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, at (216) 672-2851.

Thank you very much for your cooperation; your participation is a tremendous help. Please return the completed survey to my mail box, # 57, or to the survey box in the office (and please fill it out no more than once.)

Sincerely,

Patrick Daugherty
Graduate Student

APPENDIX B.

SURVEY OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN KENT STATE UNIVERSITY'S SLIS PROGRAM

Please fill out the following data for the first five questions. For the survey that follows, please circle the response that most closely reflects your opinion of the following statements.

1. I am primarily a student in the: ____ Kent program ____ Columbus program.
2. The semester and year I entered the SLIS program:
   Fall 19____ Spring 19____ Summer 19____.
3. I am: ___ Female ___ Male.
4. I am primarily interested in the following type(s) of library/work setting:
   ___undecided ___academic ___public ___school ___special _____(other).
5. I am a: _____ full-time student _____ part-time student.
6. I am working/have worked in a library prior to or during the MLIS program.
   ___ Yes ___ No

Scale Definition

1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=agree; 4=strongly agree; N/A=not applicable/no opinion.

Administration	1.	The SLIS program provides timely information on current job prospects.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	2.	As a new student, I received a good orientation to the program.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	3.	The school provides adequate preparation for job interviews.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	4.	There is an opportunity for student input concerning the SLIS program.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	5.	The informational materials about the program prior to admission are adequate.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	6.	The registration procedures are clearly explained.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	7.	I received admission materials in a timely manner.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	8.	The course descriptions accurately reflect the actual content of the courses.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	9.	Degree requirements are clearly stated.	1	2	3	4	N/A
Program Standards	10.	The SLIS program maintains a high academic standard.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	11.	I am receiving satisfactory preparation for the type(s) of setting(s) in which I want to work.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	12.	The faculty members are well prepared for classes.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	13.	Examinations and papers are graded fairly.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	14.	I will be proud to be a librarian.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	15.	I am encouraged to do original thinking in my assignments.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	16.	Course evaluations are appropriate.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	17.	I received satisfactory instruction in computer procedures required by the coursework.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	18.	The program meets my expectations.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	19.	I feel I am receiving a satisfactory education.	1	2	3	4	N/A

	20.	The program provides good preparation for professional work in library and information science.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	21.	I will be proud to be a graduate of the Kent State School of Library and Information Science.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	22.	I have computer experience outside of that which I have received in the school of library and information science.	1	2	3	4	N/A
Research Paper	23.	My advisor provides adequate time for advising.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	24.	The research paper is a valuable learning experience.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	25.	My research paper advisor is helpful in preparing my paper.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	26.	I am receiving the help I need in selecting a topic for the research paper.	1	2	3	4	N/A
Curriculum	27.	There is sufficient flexibility in the program to pursue individual interests.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	28.	There are too many core courses.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	29.	Courses are offered at reasonable times of the day.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	30.	There is too much work in this program as a whole.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	31.	An appropriate number of courses is offered on Saturdays.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	32.	My practicum provides a valuable experience in a library setting.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	33.	The school provides the courses I want.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	34.	There should be more electives in my program.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	35.	An appropriate number of courses is offered in the evenings.	1	2	3	4	N/A
Faculty	36.	The faculty communicate current knowledge of the field.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	37.	Faculty members listen to the opinions of the students.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	38.	In general, faculty members are available during their office hours.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	39.	The faculty presents a variety of viewpoints.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	40.	There is mutual respect between faculty and students.	1	2	3	4	N/A
Resources/ Support	41.	The support staff (secretaries, lab assistants, etc.) are helpful.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	42.	The facilities of the computer lab meet my needs.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	43.	The library's periodical collection meets my course needs.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	44.	The library's book collection meets my needs.	1	2	3	4	N/A
	45.	The library's other resources (databases, etc.) are sufficient.	1	2	3	4	N/A

Please attach any additional comments you wish to make.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION; PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY TO MY MAILBOX (#57) OR TO THE SURVEY BOX IN THE OFFICE.

APPENDIX C.

Mean Scores for All Items on the Scale by 1989 and 1996 Surveys.

Statement	1989		1996	
	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s
1. The SLIS program provides timely information on current job prospects.	3.20	.571	2.76	.702
2. As a new student, I received a good orientation to the program.	2.18	.835	2.67	.769
3. The school provides adequate preparation for job interviews.	2.64	.802	2.28	.856
4. There is an opportunity for student input concerning the SLIS program	2.41	.770	2.60	.726
5. The informational materials about the program prior to admission are adequate.	2.82	.673	2.87	.648
6. The registration procedures are clearly explained.	2.74	.749	3.04	.671
7. I received admission materials in a timely manner.	3.09	.642	3.29	.601
8. The course descriptions accurately reflect the actual content of the courses.	2.87	.554	2.98	.635
9. Degree requirements are clearly stated.	3.13	.620	3.26	.661
10. The SLIS program maintains a high academic standard.	3.01	.649	3.08	.682
11. I am receiving satisfactory preparation for the type(s) of setting(s) in which I want to work.	2.86	.582	2.89	.694
12. The faculty members are well prepared for classes	3.13	.660	3.35	.548
13. Examinations and papers are graded fairly	3.09	.441	3.22	.531
14. I will be proud to be a librarian.	3.47	.518	3.61	.549
15. I am encouraged to do original thinking in my assignments.	2.93	.715	3.25	.693
16. Course evaluations are appropriate	2.99	.508	3.20	.533
17. I received satisfactory instruction in computer procedures required by the coursework.	---	---	2.74	.719
18. The program meets my expectations.	2.76	.653	2.92	.655
19. I feel I am receiving a satisfactory education	3.02	.514	3.01	.601
20. The program provides good preparation for professional work in library and information science	2.94	.584	2.97	.631
21. I will be proud to be a graduate of the Kent State School of Library and Information Science.	3.13	.613	3.23	.609
22. I have computer experience outside of that which I have received in the school of library and information science.	---	---	3.21	.784
23. My advisor provides adequate time for advising.	2.76	.757	3.01	.763
24. The research paper is a valuable learning experience.	2.55	.912	2.70	.852

Statement	1989		1996	
	$\bar{X}$	s	$\bar{X}$	s
25. My research paper advisor is helpful in preparing my paper	3.06	.826	3.01	.835
26. I am receiving the help I need in selecting a topic for the research paper.	2.72	.929	2.82	.864
27. There is sufficient flexibility in the program to pursue individual interests	2.75	.756	2.86	.805
28. There are too many core courses	2.81	.636	2.82	.754
29. Courses are offered at reasonable times of the day.	3.00	.671	2.65	.727
30. There is too much work in this program as a whole.	2.62	.696	2.92	.663
31. An appropriate number of courses is offered on Saturdays.	2.53	.730	2.62	.773
32. My practicum provides a valuable experience in a library setting.	3.39	.655	3.40	.602
33. The school provides the courses I want.	2.64	.709	2.64	.667
34. There should be more electives in my program.	2.10	.727	2.21	.781
35. An appropriate number of courses is offered in the evenings.	2.95	.748	2.80	.773
36. The faculty communicate current knowledge of the field.	3.14	.576	3.28	.571
37. Faculty members listen to the opinions of the students.	2.93	.629	3.21	.588
38. In general, faculty members are available during their office hours.	3.14	.489	3.27	.524
39. The faculty presents a variety of viewpoints.	3.02	.484	3.22	.549
40. There is mutual respect between faculty and students.	3.11	.646	3.24	.578
41. The support staff (secretaries, lab assistants, etc.) are helpful.	3.50	.510	3.62	.564
42. The facilities of the computer lab meet my needs.	2.80	.804	2.70	.895
43. The library's periodical collection meets my course needs.	2.88	.690	2.97	.739
44. The library's book collection meets my needs.	2.81	.686	2.89	.733
45. The library's other resources (databases, etc.) are sufficient.	---	---	2.91	.757

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13. Ibid., 57.

14. Tobi A. Brimsek, "A Report of the Survey of SLA Student Members," Special Libraries 81 (Fall 1990): 346.

15. Herbert S. White and Sarah I. Mort, "The Accredited Library Education Program as Preparation for Professional Library Work," Library Quarterly 60 (July 1990): 187.

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